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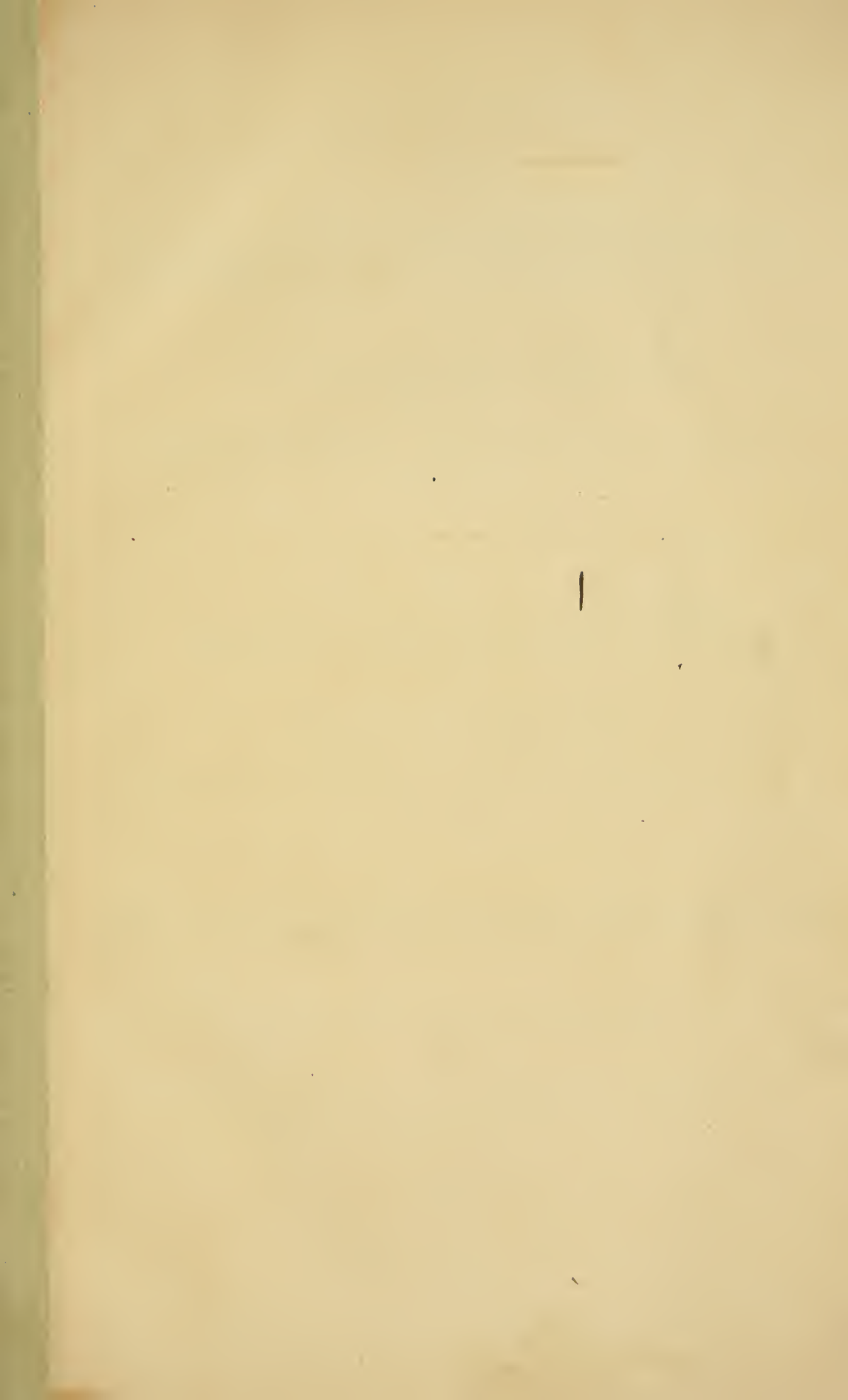
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THE
EXPOSITION
OF THE
VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY,

BY

H. T. COLEBROOKE, ESQ., F.R.S.,
&c. &c. &c.

DIRECTOR OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND IRELAND,

VINDICATED;

BEING A

Refutation of certain Published Remarks

OF

COLONEL VANS KENNEDY,

PRESIDENT OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

BY

SIR GRAVES C. HAUGHTON, KNT. K.H., M.A., F.R.S.
&c. &c. &c.

“Amicus enim Plato, amicus Socrates, sed magis amica veritas.”

*(Extracted from the ASIATIC JOURNAL for November 1835, and containing some
Paragraphs and Notes omitted in that Journal for want of room.)*

L O N D O N :

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INTRODUCTION.

CONTROVERSY is always painful ; and would be worse than useless, if it did not lead to the removal of error, and even, occasionally, to the discovery of truth. As the writer believes that both these ends have, to a certain degree, been attained in the following remarks, he has had a few copies printed off separately for his private friends, as well as for the use of scholars. The limits assigned to such letters in a Journal caused a few paragraphs and notes to be omitted, which will be now found incorporated in the following pages, as the writer deemed their insertion necessary to complete his views of the various subjects of which he has treated. Had the *Védanta* philosophy been the only point of consideration, it would hardly have been of sufficient importance to have called for this separate impression ; but, as other topics of more general interest have arisen out of that question, it seemed to him advisable, particularly as it supplied the unavoidable omissions of his published letter, to put the whole in that form that might at once give them a chance of more general perusal, as well as of deliberate consideration. A few verbal inaccuracies that occurred in the hurry of its first publication have been corrected.

An Appendix has been added with the special view of elucidating the question of Cause and Effect ; as well as of demonstrating the absurdity of the celebrated ancient maxim, *ex nihilo, nihil fit*.

London, 3d November, 1835.

THE VEDANTA SYSTEM.

REPLY OF SIR GRAVES HAUGHTON TO COLONEL VANS KENNEDY.

Addressed to the Editor of the *Asiatic Journal*.

SIR:—In the last number of your Journal, I find a letter addressed to you by Colonel Vans Kennedy, the object of which is to refute certain remarks of mine accompanying his paper on the *Védánta* philosophy, published in the third volume of the *Transactions* of the Royal Asiatic Society. My first feeling was not to put forth anything in reply; further consideration, however, led me to deviate from the course which I should otherwise be disposed to follow. I reflected, that silence might be construed into an admission that Colonel Kennedy's arguments were valid, and his assertions correct; besides which, it appeared to me that justice to Mr. Colebrooke's reputation for accuracy, and to my own motives for defending him, with the respect due to those which influenced the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society in ordering my sentiments to be printed, rendered it almost imperative on me to draw up the remarks contained in this letter. Here, I feel myself taken at a disadvantage, from having been, for a long time past, in a state of health which unfits me for any literary exertion.

With regret I perceive, that the observations, to which allusion has been made, were not accepted in a spirit resembling that which gave them utterance. I can appeal with confidence to my published remarks, and to the members who were present when I delivered them, that nothing was said, or indicated by tone or manner, which should have caused to Colonel Kennedy the slightest pain had he been even present. My observations were restricted to the expression of my conviction, that Mr. Colebrooke had been misunderstood; and that the Hindús really *had* a word in the Sanscrit language equivalent to *matter*; indeed, so much was my whole feeling opposed to anything calculated to give offence, that I spoke of Colonel Kennedy as an able and learned writer. Those sentiments were delivered on the impulse of the moment, and without premeditation, as the scope of his argument had been unknown to me, until the paper was read before the Society. It seemed a subject for regret that the meeting, which happened to be numerous, should carry away, at its separation, any impression unfavourable to Mr Colebrooke; for, recollections left on my mind by the perusal of his paper, some years before, satisfied me that he had been misunderstood. I was the more desirous of counteracting any misapprehension on the subject, as Mr. Colebrooke was disabled by loss of sight and general infirmity from making any reply to Colonel Kennedy.

The Council of the Royal Asiatic Society (I speak from some years' personal experience) has always been guided by motives of the strictest impartiality; and has invariably endeavoured to foster a spirit of research and investigation into whatever relates to the ancient or modern condition of the East; and when it has made public any observations that seemed of themselves questionable, it has taken every pains that they should be so qualified as not to lead to

a hasty and an immature decision. Acting upon these principles, the Council referred some remarks made by Mr. Money, Secretary to the Bombay Branch of the Society, on an interpretation of a Greek inscription by the Baron Silvestre de Sacy, to that very eminent scholar himself; and his reply will be found at the end of Mr. Money's remarks, in the very same *fasciculus* of the *Transactions* containing Colonel Kennedy's essay. If the Baron's letter is made to follow Mr. Money's paper, whilst most of my remarks precede Colonel Kennedy's essay, the difference must be attributed solely to the unanimous conviction of those members of the Council, who were present when Colonel Kennedy's paper was ordered to be published, that his views were altogether erroneous, and that the attack on their venerable director required special notice. The publication, therefore, of Colonel's Kennedy's essay is, of itself, a decisive proof of the strict impartiality which regulates the proceedings of the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society.

Guided by these considerations, the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society ordered, what you had reported as spoken on the occasion, to be printed with Colonel Kennedy's paper. The ill-health of our Director rendered the secretary the only official organ of the society, and, while filling that office, my reply, consequently, proceeded no less from the necessity of performing its duties than from admiration of Mr. Colebrooke's rare talents, mingled with sympathy for his sufferings, which did not allow him even to defend himself from a simple misconception. Though acting under the impulse of the moment, I felt that, in addressing a public assembly on one of the most abstruse points of Hindú metaphysics,—one in which few persons take an interest, and on which fewer still possess any definite notions,—it was desirable to put the argument in that form which would admit of general comprehension. The meeting at large understood that Mr. Colebrooke was represented by Colonel Kennedy to be in error, though but few possessed the requisite *data* in order to form a correct judgment on the points of difference. It was evident that the patience of the meeting was nearly exhausted in listening to the long extracts from the mystic metaphysicians of Germany, with which that essay concluded; and that the only chance left of rousing the attention of the members was to follow the homely recommendation given by that eminent physician and philosopher, Dr. Matthew Baillie, when assisting in a consultation with some of his professional brethren; and I accordingly endeavoured to give my auditors "a mouthful of common sense." For this reason, I refrained from the use of technical terms, and scholastic forms of illustration. In accordance with this view, my reply was limited to the maintaining of two positions; the first, that Mr. Colebrooke comprehended the sense of his author; the second, that the Hindús *had*, contrary to Colonel Kennedy's opinion, a word for *matter*. What I said on the occasion was received with approbation, for all were gratified to find that their venerable director *was* in the right. Subsequently, when the Council of our Society determined that my sentiments should be prefixed to Colonel Kennedy's essay, it appeared requisite that something more special should be given regarding certain points, on which I had not thought proper to touch in addressing a public assembly; and the last paragraph and note were therefore added. It was evidently necessary that these should be in keeping with the rest, so that the whole argument might preserve a popular form; for I have always entertained the persuasion, that the strength of an argument consists in its own cogency, and not in an array of technical phrases, which can be understood only by the initiated few.

Unwilling to rely on my own judgment, where the reputation of the Royal

Asiatic Society, as well as that of Mr. Colebrooke, was concerned, I referred the whole subject to the late Rammohun Roy. It will probably be conceded by all persons acquainted with such matters, that it would have been difficult to find a man more competent to pronounce an opinion on the question at issue than that gifted individual.

Profoundly versed in the literature and philosophy of his own country, himself an expounder in English of the *Védánta* philosophy, both by a reference to the *Védas* and the comments written to explain them, he was the very man to be considered as the *ductor dubitantium*. Rammohun Roy reiterated on this occasion his high admiration of Mr. Colebrooke's perfect acquaintance with Indian literature, which he had so often expressed in public* and private; and declared his entire concurrence in the manner in which Mr. Colebrooke had described the *Védánta* philosophy. He also gave his approval of my remarks. To substantiate his opinion, he pointed out two passages in his own works, one of which fully supported Mr. Colebrooke's interpretation, "that, according to the *Védánta* philosophy, God was not only the *efficient* but the *material* cause of the universe." Those passages† were printed with my remarks, by way of corroboration: no allusion is, however, made to them by Colonel Kennedy.

Having given this explanation of the causes that led to my remarks, and their subsequent publication by the order of the Council of the Society, I now proceed to adduce arguments in proof that Mr. Colebrooke has really been misapprehended by Colonel Kennedy. If I did not do so more explicitly before, the reason will appear in the foregoing statement, wherein the object of my published remarks has been shewn, and my conviction that all who took any interest in the subject could themselves refer to Mr. Colebrooke's own publications.

It is known to every one acquainted with Indian literature, that Mr. Colebrooke has given, in distinct publications, in the *Asiatic Researches* of Calcutta, and in the *Transactions* of our own Society, which he founded, and of which he accepted the office of director, some masterly translations of original works, and many admirable essays on the language, the literature, and the philosophy of the Hindús. In all these he had undertaken to be the *expositor*, and not the *critic*, of the works he brought before the public. Acting on this principle, he has seldom, by any expression, given his own opinion of his author. It will shortly be seen, however, that, by a fortunate departure from his usual reserve, he has left a record of his opinion of the *Védánta* philosophy that removes all doubt as to his own conception of its nature; and, consequently, should it appear to be, as Colonel Kennedy asserts, a system of gross and material pantheism in the writings of Mr. Colebrooke, such an inference must be deduced from the expressions of its Indian interpreters, who are faithfully rendered by him.

* The following is an extract from the report of the Anniversary Meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society, held on the 11th of May 1833, as given in the *Asiatic Journal* for July of that year:—"The Rájá Rammohun Roy, in rising to propose the vote of thanks to Henry Thomas Colebrooke, Esq., director of the Society, said, that he could not allow himself to do so without stating his high opinion of Mr. Colebrooke's talents and character; he might, indeed, say, that he never knew any person who stood higher in his estimation than that venerable gentleman. It had long been the opinion of learned Hindús, the rájá observed, that it was impossible for Europeans to acquire a profound and accurate knowledge of the Sanscrit language, and it was Mr. Colebrooke's translations of the *Dáya Bhága* and the *Mitáshard*, the two most esteemed commentaries on the Hindú law of inheritance, which first convinced him of the contrary, and proved to him that it was possible for Europeans to acquire a knowledge of Sanscrit equally comprehensive and correct with the natives of India."

† *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. iii. p. 413—414.

I shall now briefly reply to such of Colonel Kennedy's remarks as seem to require attention.

Colonel Kennedy, in repeating his assertion that "the essay in question exhibits a system of the grossest pantheism," and in supporting it by extracts which he has given from Mr. Colebrooke's essay, overlooks what he ought to know, that a refutation had already been given of such an opinion by the quotation made from Rammohun Roy's Abridgment of the *Védánt*, which leaves no doubt that the *Védántins* themselves assert the Deity to be the *efficient* as well as the *material* cause of the universe. The consequence, therefore, that ensues, according to Colonel Kennedy, namely, that the *Védánta* system is one of "gross materialism," must be referred to the *Védántins* themselves. The imputation cannot in any way lie against Mr. Colebrooke, and, had Colonel Kennedy been more diligent, he would have found, that, in the instance where Mr. Colebrooke has departed from his usual reserve, he has expressed himself as follows: — "The latter (*Uttara Mímánsá*), commonly called *Védánta*, and attributed to VYASA, deduces, from the text of the Indian scriptures, a refined psychology, which goes to a denial of a material world."* He ought not likewise to have founded a new charge† of inconsistency upon an objection already unanswerably refuted. If there be inconsistency, it must be referred to the native commentators, from whom the passages are drawn, and not to Mr. Colebrooke.

Colonel Kennedy has adduced a few passages from the comments of SANKARA and the *Sútras* of VYASA, where the word *máyá* is employed, and he thence infers that the doctrine of mere ILLUSION, which is so much insisted upon in modern expositions of the *Védánta* system (both written and oral); is the true and ancient one, contrary to the declaration of Mr. Colebrooke. That, however, this is a misconception on the part of Colonel Kennedy, will, I think, appear quite evident from the following considerations. In those ancient *Sútras* or memorial verses, and in SANKARA's comment upon them, the Deity, or BRAHM, is represented as the sole source of every thing. Individuality is denied to all other existing things. All the phenomena of physical nature result merely from the exertion of his energy (*sakti*), likewise called *nature* (*prakriti*), and *illusion* (*máyá*). This energy, nature, or illusion, is to be considered as *unreal*, because there is nothing but BRAHM; and it is *real*, inasmuch as it is the cause of every thing we behold about us.

These words, therefore, so restricted, are not to be taken in the sense they are employed in dictionaries or other systems. Energy, nature, or illusion, is further qualified by being called *unborn* (*ajá*), and it is also termed *ignorance* (*avidyá*‡), when visible nature is taken for a real essence by minds unenlightened by divine knowledge. Energy, nature, or illusion, therefore, cannot be said to be anything *essential*, but it is something *actual*. Hence, these three words are not the terms for a power, a state, or an abstraction personified by the abuse of language, but are intended to intimate something certainly that never before entered the head of any other than a Hindú philosopher, and which, for want of a better term, we must call an *actuality*; that is, something possessing potentiality, but destitute of essentiality, and busily employed in presenting to the Deity, while he is in calm repose, all the phenomena dependent upon sensation, thought, and the contemplation of the visible world, and causing him to behold himself diversified into an infinite but fallacious

* *Trans.* Royal Asiatic Society, vol. i. p. 19.

† *Vide* Col. Kennedy's letter, p. 98.

‡ As these five terms are quoted by Colonel Kennedy himself, I have been particular in their explanation.

individuality. Such is the ancient doctrine. How different is this from that which it has been represented by modern writers, when the Deity is summarily described as the cause of all things, and all appearances to be mere juggle and illusion! In this last sense, the word "illusion" is only employed to represent an abstract idea. It is true that *máyá*, in its common acceptation, implies *illusion*; but it has been shewn that it is not the only term employed to express this *something* which the *Védántins* consider as indescribable, but is employed, along with the words "energy" (*sakti*) and "nature" (*prakriti*), to modify their meaning. *Máyá* is not to be considered as illusion, but as that sort of self-induced hypostasis of the Deity, by which he presents to himself the whole of animate and inanimate nature. Energy, nature, or illusion, is, therefore, that self-induced condition, which, according to the *Védántins*, arises in the Deity when he wills to diversify himself, and says, "I may become many." Hence, the object of all divine knowledge, according to the *Védántins*, is to overcome the illusion produced by the consciousness of individuality; and to arrive at the great conviction that individual soul and the Deity are not distinct; and that man, discovering his divine origin, which had been hid from him by energy, nature, or illusion, may become certain that "I am BRAHM."

Dr. J. Taylor, in his appendix to the *Prabod'h Chandro'daya*, which contains a tolerably fair account of the *Védánta* philosophy, but in which he has blended the ancient and modern doctrines, felt the full difficulty of interpreting the sense of *máyá*; he, accordingly, calls it "motion;" and, in his note, "negation" and "falsehood," as will be seen in the following extracts:

"The question, how does desire or volition arise in this simple Being, forms the subject of many disputes; and I believe that even the subtlety of Hindú metaphysics has not yet furnished a satisfactory reply.

"The motion which results from this desire is denominated *Maia*, which signifies false, illusory, what has no real existence.* In popular language, it denotes nature, or the principle from which sensible things proceed; and in mythology it is known under the names *Saraswati*, *Parvati*, &c., the consorts of *Bramha*, *Siv*, &c., and who are also considered the *Sactis*, or powers, of their respective lords. The motion which is thus excited is the immediate cause of creation. It is declared in the *Véd*, 'that God as *Maia* creates the world.'"

Two hundred years earlier, Henry Lord, a chaplain in the East-India Company's Service, translated *máyá*, "passion or affection."

Indeed, with all these facts before him, it is difficult to conceive how Colonel Kennedy could suppose that the word *máyá* implied mere illusion; and I shall now quote from his own essay a passage which will shew that he himself did not take it in any such sense. He says: "But the *Védánticas* at the same time maintain, as the preceding quotations will have fully shewn, that, though in a certain sense the production of worldly appearances may be ascribed to the Supreme Being, as they proceed from his *fiat*, still he must not be considered as being the immediate cause of them.

"The thus separating his *energy* from the Supreme Being, and giving to it an independent power, is certainly one of the most incomprehensible conceptions that ever occurred to a philosopher."†

All these reasons should have made Colonel Vans Kennedy more cautious

* "I am not quite certain as to the etymology of this word, but I am told that it has two meanings,—negation and falsehood." This account is termed, by Col. Kennedy, "succinct but correct."—*Hindu Mythology*, p. 156.

† *Trans. Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. iii. p. 419.

in censuring a scholar of Mr. Colebrooke's known accuracy; and he should have given that gentleman the benefit of the reasonable interpretation which he has claimed for himself, in the following passage, extracted from his letter: "I farther remarked, that, in reading *Védánta* works, the utmost care should be taken not to be misled by the language in which its doctrine is expressed, or by the illustrations adduced in its explanation; for, otherwise, it would appear to be a system of pure materialism, notwithstanding the clearest texts to the contrary. These observations surely deserved some attention, before Sir G. C. Haughton undertook to shew that I had mistaken the view given of the *Védánta* system in Mr. Colebrooke's essay; for I doubt much whether Sir G. C. Haughton has himself been able to form a clear conception of the subject discussed in that essay."†

It must be, indeed, clear from all that has been said, that such a system, if it be even perfectly comprehensible, cannot be represented by language, but must be inferred by the mind from the principles already laid down. The *Védántins* themselves have felt the full force of the difficulty, as will be seen from the following extract from Dr. Taylor's work:—"It (*máyá*) is sometimes, however, represented as having a real existence; but this means only that it exists as motion or energy, and not as Being. This will explain the ambiguous terms by which it is expressed in several parts of the translations, as where it is affirmed that *Maia* is neither true nor false. It is not true, because it has no essence; and it is not false, because it exists as the power of the universal Being."

Even if we select the term *máyá* as the only true representative of this system, still it must be felt, after all that has been said, that it is not intended to mean 'illusion,' but *that* which raises illusive appearances in our minds. It has the same relation to illusion, that a type has to its impressions, a substance to its shadow, and a panorama to the effects it produces on the mind of the spectator. In some points, *máyá* bears a resemblance to the *noumenon*, that is the cause of phenomena, in the philosophy of Kant, and which he invented to obviate the popular objection to the system of Berkeley, who made spirits and ideas the sum of all things. The *Védánta* system represents the Deity covering himself with nature (*máyá*), as with a mask, for his amusement; and if the spiritual nature of the doctrine be borne in mind, it is not very much misrepresented by Pope, when, speaking of the Universe, he says:—

"Whose body Nature is, and God the soul."

All that has been said will shew that Mr. Colebrooke was right; and, that your readers may feel fully assured that in the preceding remarks I have not slurred the questions at issue, I reprint, even at the expense of prolixity, Col. Kennedy's charge against Mr. Colebrooke and myself:—

"For it is evident that the late secretary did not even understand the question in dispute between Mr. Colebrooke and myself, as it was to this quotation from Mr. Colebrooke's Essay on the *Védánta* system that the secretary's remarks referred: 'The notion that the versatile world is an illusion (*máyá*); that all which passes to the apprehension of the waking individual is but a phantasy presented to his imagination, and every seeming thing is unreal and all is visionary, does not appear to be the text of the *Védánta*. I have remarked nothing that countenances it in the *Sútras* of *VYASA*, nor in the gloss of *SANKARA*, but much concerning it in the minor commentaries and elementary treatises.' The words in italics will shew that it was quite unnecessary for Sir G. C. Haugh-

* *Asiatic Journal*, vol. xviii. p. 98.

ton to remark, 'I am not aware that Mr. Colebrooke has asserted, or ever meant to imply, that the basis of the *Védánta* philosophy is material; although he certainly has said that the term *máyá*, or illusion, which is now so commonly employed by the followers of this school, is not favoured by a reference to the early commentators. It is, indeed, impossible to suppose that Mr. Colebrooke, the most profound expositor of the doctrines of the Hindú metaphysicians that Europe has yet produced, could have entertained such a singular opinion; an opinion that would be contrary to that of almost every boy in India.' For, in the very passage quoted, Mr. Colebrooke expressly mentions, that he was acquainted with the *Védánta* system in its modern state; and the object, therefore, of my paper was to evince that a belief in *máyá* was the ancient and original doctrine of the *Védántikas*, and that this was supported, not only by the *Sútras* of VYASA and the gloss of SHANKARA, but also by the *Védas* and *Upanishads*. This was a simple fact, which could only be disproved by its being shewn that the texts, to which I referred, were spurious or non-existent, or that I had misunderstood their meaning. Whether Mr. Colebrooke considered this system to be spiritual or material, was not the question; but whether the view which he had given of it in that essay, was consonant to the tenets and writings of the *Védántikas*. This I denied, and Sir G. C. Haughton, instead of meeting my objections, has entered into observations which are quite irrelevant to the subject."*

Colonel Kennedy, it will be seen, has quite forgotten that he *did* charge Mr. Colebrooke with representing the *Védánta* philosophy as material; † and that, therefore, it *was* part and parcel of the question; and consequently I did not "enter into observations which are quite irrelevant to the subject," in defending Mr. Colebrooke from such a misrepresentation. What I have said will prove that Colonel Kennedy, in confounding cause and effect, *has* "misunderstood the meaning of his texts;" and that, too, by adopting the very errors which it was Mr. Colebrooke's object to discountenance; for, to fix the whole weight of the argument upon the sense of *Máyá*, is, manifestly, to misrepresent the ancient doctrine of the *Védánta* system, as *sakti*, or *prakriti*, singly or conjointly, do equally well represent what is intended by the *Védántins*.

Colonel Kennedy, in quoting the foregoing passage from Mr. Colebrooke, ought not to have omitted the sentence which immediately followed it, namely:—"I take it (the notion that the versatile world is an illusion (*máyá*), &c.) to be no tenet of the original *Védántin* philosophy, but of another branch, from which later writers have borrowed it, and have intermixed and confounded the two systems. The doctrine of the early *Védánta* is complete and consistent, without this graft of a later growth." ‡

Professor Wilson, the highest authority we have on the subject after Mr. Colebrooke, expresses himself to the same effect, in a letter I have received from him since the foregoing remarks were written, although he had not the most remote intimation of my line of argument. That gentleman expresses himself thus:—

"It is no doubt difficult, it may be impossible, to reconcile the notion of the origin of material substance from a purely spiritual source; and the language

* See Colonel Kennedy's letter, p. 95.

† *Trans.* Royal Asiatic Society, vol. iii. p. 420—21.

‡ Mr. Colebrooke's *Essays* have been translated into French by M. Pauthier, and illustrated with valuable Notes, in which he has shewn with much ability and erudition the points in which the Indian and Greek philosophers agree. His work is published in a small and convenient form, with an excellent index, and is entitled "Essais sur la Philosophie des Hindous." The learned Professor Frank, of Munich, sent me, about a year ago, an elaborate essay, to confirm Mr. Colebrooke's views, but I have made no use of it, as I did not know whether to consider it a private or public document.

in which the process is illustrated attaches a degree of materiality to the latter. It was from a sense of this dilemma, probably, that the later Védántís invented the doctrine of *máyá* or illusion,—a doctrine which, as far as I have observed, is not familiar to what may be considered the oldest authorities.”

My remarks have extended to so great a length in refuting what appeared to me the most important topics of difference, that I must dismiss the others in a more brief, but, I trust, not less satisfactory manner. Colonel Kennedy had stated in his essay, and has repeated it in his letter, that the Hindús had no word for *matter*. It will be sufficiently obvious that it would have amounted to an impossibility if some of the subtlest metaphysicians the world has ever produced, have been reasoning for the last three thousand years upon the nature of things, without having a term for this prime constituent of nature.

Previously to making any remarks on the word *matter*, I must quote Colonel Kennedy’s own words:—“The late secretary’s remarks, with respect to the word *matter*, are so unintelligible, that I must restrict my reply to them to the note, in which it is said that ‘*mátra* is a feminine noun in Sanscrit, as *materia* is in Latin; and both mean *the substance of which things are made.*’ But it will be in vain to refer to Professor Wilson’s or any other Sanscrit dictionary or vocabulary, to find such a meaning given to *mátra*; and Sir G. C. Haughton has himself quoted this passage from the *Institutes of Mánu*: ‘with minute transformable atoms of the five elements, called *mátrás*, &c.’* So that *one of the five elementary atoms, the substance of which things are made, and matter*, are terms which express the same idea. To make any remarks on such an extraordinary philological and metaphysical exposition, must be quite unnecessary. It is, however, on such grounds that Sir G. C. Haughton has controverted my observation, that there is no term in the Sanscrit language equivalent to the word *matter*.”

To this Colonel Kennedy has appended the following note:—“*Mátra* is here used for *tanmátra*, which signifies one of the five primeval atoms, from which the Hindús suppose that ether, air, fire, water, and earth, originated—otherwise, *mátra* has no such meaning.”

Colonel Kennedy, in the foregoing remarks, seems to have overlooked the fact, that people must have a language before they can philosophize; and that words must have had a primary, before they obtained a secondary, or induced, sense. This is the case with the word *mátrá*, which must originally have meant an atom, and, in the plural, atoms; for, MANU himself calls *mátráh* atoms; and, if it be really the equivalent of *tanmátra*, the invisible form or archetype of the five elements, then of what parts or portions are these last composed? The five *tanmátras*, indubitably meaning nothing more than the invisible forms or archetypes of matter, are no where employed by MANU; but the term is always preferred by the commentators, in the sense I have assigned, in preference to *mátrá*. Whether MANU, therefore, has employed the word *mátráh*, as meaning the invisible archetypes of the elements, or the atoms which

* In justice to myself I must be allowed to quote the whole verse, instead of the garbled extract given here by Colonel Kennedy: it is as follows:—“With minute transformable atoms of the five elements, called *mátrás*, the whole of this (universe) comes into existence in due succession.” Now it must be evident that, if this universe is made up of these *mátrás*, they must constitute the *substance* of the universe. Whether the doctrine expounded in MANU makes the universe *formal* or *real*, has nothing to do with the question; for, though it be formal, the same relation must hold between its parts as if it were real; and this consequence is fully laid down in KULLÚKA’S comment on verse 27, book I, where he says, “from the minute comes the gross; and from the gross, the grosser, &c.” This is in the passage which Colonel Kennedy says he could not find.

become visible by aggregation, and compose the five elements, must be determined by the context alone. That, at all events, they constitute the *substratum* of form, cannot be doubted; for, in verse 19, of the same book, we have the expression "*form-mâtrás,*" which KULLÚKA explains by "minute portions or parts which constitute body." Logicians have always held, I believe, that form cannot exist without matter, nor matter without form; and if so, these *mâtrás* are really equivalent to matter. Every one acquainted with grammar must be aware that a noun, in the plural, signifies an aggregation, and is the equivalent of one, implying a class of things. Thus, fishes and fish, letters and literature, may be used indifferently. Now, in the passage in MANU, the word is in the plural, and not in the singular, as Colonel Kennedy supposes, by translating it "*one of the five elementary atoms,*" its plural sign (*h*) having suffered elision for the sake of euphony; and this is proved by its adjectives remaining in the plural, as well as from the whole context of the verse. This is a mistake that ought not to have been made by a *tyro* in the language, far less by one who undertook to criticise the most exact scholar of his age.

Every one conversant with these subjects must know, that, in philosophic language, *substance*, *body*, and *matter*, mean all one and the same thing; and, as such, are opposed to *spirit*. Yet, inconsistently enough, only a few lines afterwards, Colonel Kennedy repeats, what he had previously said in his essay: "Gautama and Kanada hold, that *substance* is an aggregation of atoms."

But, as he has appealed to Professor Wilson's Sanscrit dictionary, it is with much pleasure that I subjoin* all the senses given to *mâtra* and *tanmâtra* by that eminent scholar in his erudite work.

I will now demonstrate that *mâtrá* and *materia* are really connected; but, previously, I will remark, that *materia* is related to *mâtrá* by nearly the same analogy as the Latin *patera*, 'a goblet,' is to the Sanscrit, *pâtra*, 'a drinking vessel,' derived from the root *pá*, 'drink.' The Sanscrit language, as the most perfect branch, or the great trunk, of the Greek, the Latin, and Teutonic languages, removes a difficulty that, without its aid, could never be solved. Thus, the meanings of this word, given in Professor Wilson's Dictionary, will explain the senses it bears in the foregoing languages. *Mâtram* makes in Greek *μέτρον*; in Latin, *materia*; in English, it is still preserved in the word *mother*, implying the feculent matter that forms in sour beer, or vinegar; and so true are these languages, in their parallel deviations from their original etymons, that we find the Sanscrit *mâtri* giving birth to the Greek *μήτηρ*; the Latin *mater*; and the English *mother*. A reference to Dr. Webster's Dictionary will shew how much he is perplexed to ascertain the cause of the radical difference in sense between the two sets of words, which he finds in nearly all the languages of Teutonic origin.

I must, however, go even beyond this refutation, and inform your readers of what they might reasonably have expected, namely, that the Sanscrit language contains many words for *matter*. Take the following as examples:—

* "MATRAM, neuter. The whole, the entire thing or class of things. (adv.) Only, solely (exclusive and identical, the very thing). The primitive subtle or invisible type of visible elementary matter. A pleonastic addition to words. MATRA, fem. Requisite, material. Quantity, measure. A little. An ear-ring. Wealth, substance. A short vowel. A moment. Quantity in metre or prosody, a syllabic foot. The upper or horizontal limb of the *Nagari* characters." Even the derivative *tanmâtra*, as it will be seen, lends him no assistance:—"TANMATRAM, neuter. The archetype or subtle rudiment of elementary matter." The root of both these words is *má*, "measure." *Tram*, like the Greek *τρον*, is added to roots to form nouns implying instruments. *Mâtra*, therefore, means a measure (of space) i.e. *matter*.

vastu, vasu, dravya, saríra, múrtti, tattva, padártha, pradhána, múla-prakriti; and, with the Jains, *puḍgala*.

What I have here said will, perhaps, be considered a sufficient reply to the following remark made by Colonel Kennedy:—"To evince, therefore, that this opinion was erroneous, Sir G. C. Haughton ought, if he could, to have shewn that those definitions, or some one of them, applied to the opinions respecting matter, which have been entertained by the philosophers of Europe; or he ought to have produced a Sanserit term, which conveyed precisely or nearly the same idea as the words *matter, materia, ὕλη*, and not to have contented himself with a mere similarity of sound between *máttra* and *materia*, when the real significations of those words were so entirely dissimilar."*

Since the remarks that precede and follow have been written, it has occurred to me that the whole subject, whether as it regards the fallacy of Colonel Kennedy's assertion, my own objection to it, or the nature of the doctrine contained in the Institutes of MANU, might all be put in one line, that would enable every one to judge for himself. The following line, therefore, contains, according to that system of *evolution* or emanation, the order in which all things were evolved by the Deity at Creation, *viz.*:—

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
<i>God.</i>	<i>Mind.</i>	<i>Consciousness.</i>	<i>Mátrás.</i>	<i>Elements :</i>

That is, God first produced mind, which then generated the conscious principle; this last the *Mátrás*, and these the five elements, *i. e.* ether, air, fire, water, and earth. Now, any one conversant with such topics will see at a glance that the *Mátrás* must represent the *invisible* types of the *visible* atoms which compose the elements; and that these therefore, in the aggregate, are the *crude stuff* intended by the Greek ὕλη, the Latin *materia*, and the English *matter*.

Colonel Kennedy finds fault that, when I alluded to nature, I did not appeal to Cicero, or some other great authority, on the subject. The fact is, that, being aware of the vague manner in which that word is employed, and knowing that it means anything and every thing, and, therefore, nothing, I put the argument in that form which would make the definition complete; and said, that *nature must be either a dependent or an absolute existence*. In referring to this, however, he finds it not right by only considering one member of the position; yet this comprehensive mode of embracing a subject is mentioned with applause by Lord Brougham, in his Discourse of Natural Theology, page 93, in quoting Cudworth, as follows:—"Whatsoever is, or hath any kind of entity, doth either subsist by itself, or else is an attribute, affection, or mode of something that doth subsist by itself." Certainly, I did not take this from Cudworth, but we both borrowed from the same source, namely, common sense, and two thousand years before Cudworth was born, he was anticipated in such forms by Aristotle, when he laid it down that "being is either by itself or by accident."†

In my remarks, I had said that there was not one‡ of the six schools that

* *Asiatic Journal* for October.

† Enfield's *Hist. Philos.* Vol. I. p. 232.

‡ When I uttered this opinion, I did not so much consider the declarations of the Hindu metaphysicians, as the consequences to be deduced from them. Thus, in the atheistic *Sánkhya*, matter is said to be eternal; but the consummation of that philosophy is, that the percipient shall discover the great truth that "neither I AM, nor is aught MINE, nor I exist," (Káriká, 64.) Now, it is clear that if the percipient does not exist, that which he has discovered through his percipiency, namely, matter, cannot rationally be said to have any existence; and, therefore, cannot be *essentially* material. Besides, the atheistic *Sánkhya* represents all things as springing by evolution from nature or matter (*pradhána*), thus making a double basis, one *real* the other *formal*. This inconsistency would lead to a strong suspicion that the atheistic is, as might be expected, subsequent to the theistic branch, which represents the Deity as the source of matter and soul. Such a conclusion is inevitable, except we admit that *pradhána* does not mean matter, but a plastic principle which has been substituted for omnipotent Deity. In all other

appeared to me to be *essentially* material. Colonel Kennedy, in consequence, objects to this, though it might be considered, in some sort, as a concession to himself, when he said there was no word for *matter*. I need scarcely point out, that Col. Kennedy here places himself in a dilemma; for, if I am right, he should not have brought the objection; and, if I am wrong, as he argues in remarking upon it, he ought to be acquainted with the fundamental principle of the atheistic *Sánkhya* system, which holds that matter is eternal; and he thereby disproves his own assertion, that the Hindús have no word for *matter*. Nor is this the only inconvenience that attends Colonel Kennedy's being at variance with himself in the preceding remark; for, in doing so, he has overlooked the fact that the *Sánkhya* is divided into three branches, namely, the atheistic, theistic, and that of the *Puránas*. The two latter do not maintain the eternity of matter. It is, therefore, strange that he should assert that "the *Védánta* is the only one of those schools which acknowledges the existence of God;" and that the rest, though they admit the existence of God in terms, "inculcate pure materialism." (Here again is materialism *without matter*.) Now the system expounded in *MANU* is the theistic *Sánkhya*, and, therefore, is not pure materialism; and we accordingly find in this work, which has nothing to do with the *Védánta*, many sublime allusions to the Deity, of which the following is an example:—"HE, whom the mind alone can perceive, whose essence eludes the external organs, who has no visible parts, who exists from eternity, even HE, the soul of all beings, whom no being can comprehend, shone forth in person."*

But this kind of inconsequence is not unfrequent in Colonel Kennedy's writings, as will be proved by the following extracts taken from page 214, of his "Researches into the Nature and Affinity of Ancient and Hindu Mythology," where he admits the *material tendency* of the doctrine of the *Védas* themselves. This work I had never looked into till it was pointed out to me by a friend, after this letter was written:—

"With this spiritual system, therefore, a material generation of the world would seem to be incompatible; and yet in the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Purans, the manner in which the process of creation is described *most incontestably admits the existence of matter*, and of individuated substances." Again: "Though the system described (in the following remarks and quotations) is *decidedly material*, yet the Hindús believe that there is in reality no other entity than one, sole, self-existent, eternal and individual spirit."

Colonel Kennedy says, that it is impossible to understand what I meant by remarking that, "an intellectual system supposes God is ALL; a material, and therefore, pantheistic view, involves the idea that ALL is God." But he omits that which would have made the whole clear, *viz.*:—"The first has a spiritual; the latter, a material basis:" and asserts, "that God is all, and all is God, must be considered as convertible terms." To shew, however, that the inference is not inevitable, I have only to remark, if the omission I have already supplied be not sufficient to make the matter clear, that, when it is said, in this popular mode of putting the argument, *God is all*, it embraces the whole of those systems that constitute the Deity the first cause and source of every thing; but when it is asserted that *all is God*, eternal matter is assumed to be the origin of every thing, and all the beautiful order and harmony we observe in the universe, to be the mere result of an inherent energy and fitness. This

other respects, the two systems are in perfect accordance with one another, with the exception of the irreconcilable dogma, "neither I AM, nor is aught MINE, nor I exist," which is only held by the atheistic branch.

* *MANU*, Book I. v. 7.

matter, energy, and fitness, must, therefore, in the imagination of those who hold such a doctrine, constitute deity.

Much stress is laid by Colonel Kennedy on the doctrine of the Eleatic school, with regard to the $\tau\omicron\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu$ and $\tau\omicron\ \pi\alpha\nu$. I had made some remarks in my note on the $\tau\omicron\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu$ of PARMENIDES, which are controverted by Colonel Kennedy; and to which I now reply in a comprehensive way, premising merely that I am speaking in philosophical and not theological language. The Eleatic school, in defining God and Nature as $\tau\omicron\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu$ and $\tau\omicron\ \pi\alpha\nu$, were not apparently aware that both these terms are derived from sensible things. What is *one*, must in philosophic language be definite; and so must the *whole* of anything. Now, to say that God, in such a sense, is one, or that Nature is all, is to take away infinity from both. Schelling, a philosopher of the modern German school, felt the force of the difficulty, and prefixed to the word unity, "absolute," and speaks of God as an *absolute unity*. But, if the Deity be incomprehensible and inscrutable, how is his nature made more comprehensible to the human mind by employing a term which is equally incomprehensible? Is not this very like *ignotum per ignotius*? The wisdom of ancient Egypt did not overlook the inconceivable difficulty of the question, when it gave, as the aphorism of its thrice-great HERMES, that *the universe is a circle whose centre is everywhere, and whose boundary is no where*. All this must prove that the subject is too awful and unsearchable to be approached by the human mind; and that the divine nature can never be discovered by the aid of philosophy. Every one who has reflected on the subject will feel with humility, that the plumb-line of human reasoning is too short to do more than reach the surface of that ABYSS, which we are all but too prone to attempt to fathom. Therefore, I feel I was right in saying, in my note, that "when we contrast the Deity with the gods of polytheism, we call him *one*: and we must do the same when we speak of him or his attributes in a theological sense, as the moral governor of the universe; but the case is altogether different when we philosophize upon the nature of his essence in the abstract."

It is worth while, however, to examine this new discovery of Schelling a little closer. The idea of *one* is purely relative, for it arises from the perception of the division of matter; and so we say, one, two, three parts, &c. Our ideas on this point are therefore perfectly clear and defined. When, however, we transfer the notion from the forms of matter, the only thing of which the senses afford us any information, to that which is indefinite, namely, infinity, and which we only know by inference, it is certain we have fallen into a fallacy. We cannot in the least release ourselves from this embarrassment by tacking to it another word, such as *absolute* for instance, as the original *materiality* and numerical relation still remain. Even if we could, by an effort of imagination, contemplate one single thing to the exclusion of everything else, that thing would still be definite; and as this idea supposes the existence of no other individual thing but the one contemplated, the relation of number could never have presented itself to the mind; and we should only have called that one thing by such a general term as *thing*, *spot*, *figure*, &c. But even admitting that we did call it *one*, and wished by language to shew that it was released from all comparison; it would still, as the one thing contemplated, and therefore *comprehended* by mind, be definite. This must prove that the term *absolute unity*, as applied to the Divine Essence, is totally inapplicable. If mankind, therefore, from the effect of daily use, should receive this new term as one perfectly applicable to the divine nature, let no one smile if some future Schelling, some scion of transcendentalism, should go one step

further, and talk of an *absolute half*, an *absolute quarter*, &c. The term *absolute unity* is, it appears to me, altogether a fallacy, as an attempt to improve upon the word *unity*, which we must, from the constitution of our minds as individual beings, attribute to the divine nature, as often as we contemplate it in its agency, as the creator and ruler of all things; but neither unity nor absolute unity, can we with *philosophic* accuracy, attribute to the Divine Essence, or Godhead, which can be represented by no sign or symbol of human invention.

It must be admitted of our worthy friends the Germans, with reference to metaphysics, that "they do (to parody the words of Shakespeare) speak an infinite deal of nothing;—more than all other men in Europe."

From allusions made by Colonel Kennedy, in the course of his letter, perhaps it is not out of place to say, that, having considerably examined all the systems of philosophy, ancient and modern, including those of India and China, I can assert, that there is not one of them that satisfies the understanding; nor is there one, if its principles and the consequences that inevitably flow from them be considered, that does not contradict itself and common sense. Take, for example, Berkeley's Treatise concerning the principles of Human Knowledge, which may be considered, perhaps, as one of the most perfect systems that have yet appeared: and of the arguments of which, Hume has truly said, that *they admit of no answer, and produce no conviction*. Yet, if according to Berkeley's principles, we reason away all our notions about the reality of space, &c., and agree with him that spirits and ideas constitute every thing, how shall we account for the *locus in quo*, which, according to the frame of our minds, we must require as a receptacle for such spirits and ideas? So likewise the system of Kant makes *phænomena*, or the things seen, to arise from *noumenon*, or what is known, which, when released from the juggle of grammatical forms, is as much as to say, that we know by seeing what we knew by knowing, or, in plain English, *we know what we knew*.* Afterwards, by converting this *noumenon*, a passive participle implying "what is known," into *something* that is the type of our ideas, he has by the help of *realism*, which he has carried to an unprecedented extent, and by the use of uncouth and obscure terms, framed a system so dark and complicated, that it has served to hood-wink most of his own countrymen, although it has been rejected, with one voice, by the unsophisticated sense of the rest of mankind. So it has already been shewn, that the *Sāṅkhya* system is completely in opposition to itself in asserting the eternity of matter, and yet not allowing that which alone perceives it to have an existence. Again, the *Védānta* system makes its *sakti*, *prakṛiti*, or *máyá* (as being both *real* and *unreal*), to hold just a middle station between something and nothing; and, notwithstanding, it represents it as possessing agency! Colonel Kennedy, however, considers this system "as one which has attained to the *ne plus ultra* of transcendentalism;"† and as "the most spiritual system that ever was imagined by man."‡

The androgynous characteristic of male and female principles, which is at the bottom of all Hindu metaphysical systems, as well as the tendency of the language to personification and realism,|| have given a bias to their philosophy

* The system of Kant therefore, when sifted from its obscurity, amounts to the well-known opinion of Plato, that *all knowledge is but reminiscence*.

† *Trans. R.A.S.* iii. 436.

‡ Col. K.'s Letter, p. 98.

§ Vide MANU, Bk. I. v. 32.

|| The tendency which *realism* has to throw all fundamental ideas *out of square*, and thus to distort in proportion the inferences drawn from them, is not solely confined to the Hindus, but exists in the very nature of language, as a consequence of the limitation of our minds. The excellent work on logic by His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, which has only lately fallen in his way, has made the writer aware that attention is, to a slight degree, awakened to the subject; but even the able writer of that work seems to have no suspicion of the magnitude of the evil, nor of the extent of the fallacies dependant upon it.

which could not be corrected even by the wonderful power and acuteness of their metaphysicians. But for the taint arising from these causes, the system contained in MANU would be almost perfect; and if its unfathomable antiquity be also considered, it must be allowed to be the most extraordinary effort ever made by the mind of man. It is the undoubted prototype of every subsequent system of which we have any knowledge, whether we call them Hindu, Chinese, Egyptian, Persian, Chaldean, or European, which are all but distorted and mutilated copies of this one grand, simple, and original conception.*

The various inconsistencies, which beset all philosophic systems, must lead to one inevitable conclusion in every reflecting mind, namely, the high probability that one radical error is common to the whole of them. This error I conceive to be, the making of things sensible and tangible the standard of that which is neither sensible nor tangible: in short, the describing the infinite, by attributes drawn from the finite;—the making the known the measure of the unknown.

Here philosophy has clearly gone beyond her depth. Of the *essence* or *sub-stratum* of things we can know nothing; but of its *forms* we have just that degree of knowledge which is obtained by observation and inference. The essence must have infinitely less similarity to the form, than a trumpet has to its sound. The Divinity is the essence, and nature the form, of things. The human soul, as connected with both God and nature, derives its *superiority* from its affinity to the first, who is the Omnipotent Cause of all things; and its *limitation* from the last, which is the mere combination of *effects* that are altogether *relative*.

Every investigation regarding matter, space, time, motion, and power,† which may be considered as the fundamental constituents of nature, will verify this assertion. All these subjects, if pushed to their remote consequences, will be found to end in a contradiction. Thus, when we consider the nature of time, we feel that each minute can be divided into sixty seconds, each second into sixty parts; and we can, in imagination, proceed on, *ad infinitum*. But while I have been dictating this sentence, at least one minute has passed containing innumerable such infinities. So, any particle of matter may be equally subdivided in thought. Yet the inference derived from every such process is a contradiction to *our* nature. It is clear, therefore, that the shortest duration of time, and the smallest extent of matter, cognizable by the senses, are *results* purely *relative*, dependent for their exhibition upon the will of the Deity. Matter, space, time, &c., must, therefore, be merely the *definite forms* of an infinite and incomprehensible essence. The quick or slow succession of our ideas, and the magnitude of objects, are effects entirely dependent on the Divine plea-

* Namely, what has already been given in one line: "God, mind, &c." The remarks above refer to the metaphysical, and not to the theological parts of the system. The following is, I conceive, the number and chronological order of the *Sāṅkhya* systems:—1° MANU (theistic); 2° KAPILA (atheistic); 3° PATANJALI (mystotheistic); 4° *Paundṛika* (mythotheistic).

† All those changes in the *material world* which stand in the relation of cause and effect, are the mere result of *POWER* as operating *before* or *after*, and constitute the sequence of nature. *No sequence, therefore, in the material world, has any thing to do with the relation of cause and effect that does not imply a transfer of power from the antecedent to the consequent.* The alternation of day and night must, therefore, be excluded from the relation of cause and effect. *Power*, consequently, whether under the direction of *individual* or *general* agency, is the medium of all those changes which we contemplate under the relation of cause and effect. In the *moral world* both *sensations* and *reflections* give rise to effects, and they equally stand in the relation of causes. The instances that may appear not to be included in the foregoing rule will be found to be merely figures of speech. Thus the two expressions "sin causes sorrow," and "the wound caused his death," when analyzed, mean nothing more than, "he who sins will be sorry," and "he was wounded and died;" for "sin," "sorrow," "wound," and "death" are *abstract states*, and not *substances*, which alone can be the medium of power. From these and similar instances, it may be laid down as a general rule that *whatever produces a change stands in the relation of a cause, and the change produced in that of an effect.* But as *source* and *product* as well as *agent* and *work*, &c. have been generally confounded with the relation of cause and effect, the reader is referred to the Appendix for further elucidation of the subject.

sure; and materialism must be here quite at fault if it attempt to solve the difficulty. If our ideas came ten thousand times quicker or slower than they do; and if the bulk of objects were in the same ratio larger or smaller than they at present appear, the effect would be precisely the same to us as it now is, for the relation between them would still be the same. To such enigmas, otherwise inexplicable, and which are in contradiction to our senses, Dr. Watts alludes in the following passage:—"Our disputations about vacuum or space, incommensurable quantities, the infinite divisibility of matter, and eternal duration, will lead us to see the weakness of our nature."

Matter, space, time, motion, and power, are those ultimate states beyond which the mind cannot pass. They are the impassable barriers which the Almighty has erected between himself and the valley of life. They are the bounds which he has set up, and which he has inscribed with characters equally legible to the illiterate and the lettered,—THUS FAR SHALT THOU GO, AND NO FARTHER.

The legitimate object of philosophy, therefore, is to discover the sequence and relation by which the phenomena of nature are linked together; and, by careful comparison, to ascertain how far we can depend upon analogy, in anticipating the constant return of the same sequence under similar circumstances. It is by this process alone that we can arrive at *the discovery of truth*, that is, of those laws by which the Deity sustains and governs the universe.

I would not, however, be supposed to derogate from the importance of metaphysical studies: perhaps no others have stronger claims on human gratitude, or serve more fully to unite man with the Author of his being; for without the assistance derived from them, he would be incapable of deducing the simplest inference. Metaphysics may indeed be truly considered as the head, physics as the body, and mathematics but as the legs and arms of science. It is only against the misdirection of such studies that I have raised my voice, as it is by the aid of metaphysics alone man can ascend the steps that lead to the summit of Nature; and they are only useless when he attempts, by their means, to dispel the clouds which veil Omnipotence from his view.

These remarks acquire peculiar force from the present state of mathematical science;—a state utterly in contradiction to that in which it was left by two of its greatest benefactors, Newton and Leibnitz. Since the death of these two great men, science, by the powerful levers they left behind them, has conquered difficulties that otherwise might have been considered insuperable to human effort. But it has sunk by the open rejection of metaphysics, that is, by the separation of the guide from the guided,—of the cripple from the blind man whom he directed,—into the contradictions of materialism,* not certainly in terms, nor by intention, in this country, but undoubtedly so in France, by placing its dependence solely on calculation and observation. The following passages by D'Alembert, extracted from his preliminary discourse prefixed to the celebrated *Encyclopédie*, will lend force to these sentiments:—

"Newton was too great a philosopher not to perceive that metaphysics are the basis of all our knowledge, and that it is in them we must seek for *clear* and *exact* notions on every subject." And again: "The science of nature is

* Once when La Place was invited to dine at the Tuilleries by Napoleon, and was placed on his right hand in compliment to his talents, he was asked by the Emperor, what he thought of a superintending Providence. His reply is said to have been, that he demanded nothing more than *la pesanteur* (gravitation) to regulate every thing! Had this ablest of modern calculators but considered the operations of his own mind, and the order and harmony of organic nature, even had he put out of sight the incomprehensible difficulties that beset the *mechanism of the heavens*, he would have had recourse to an omnipotent cause for their solution. Young had said, "The undevout astronomer is mad;" and Paley has plausibly replied, that it was not the strongest argument that could be adduced.

no other than that of bodies: but, bodies having general properties which are common to them all, such as impenetrability, mobility, and extension, it is only by the study of those properties that the science of nature should commence: they have, so to speak, a side *purely intellectual*, by which they open an immense field to the speculations of the mind; and a material and sensible side, by which they can be measured. Intellectual speculation belongs to general physics, which, properly speaking are nothing else than the metaphysics of bodies; and measurement is the object of mathematics, of which the divisions extend almost to infinity.”

The errors, that Colonel Kennedy has fallen into, seem to be the consequence of his not having sufficiently considered first principles; as well as to arise from the unlimited confidence he has placed in such clashing authorities as Cicero, Spinoza, Bayle, Brucker, Tiedemann, Fichte, Schelling, &c. Indeed, it appears to me, that in looking for assistance from those writers that have preceded us, we ought all to follow the sensible advice bequeathed to us by that truly pious man and great metaphysician, Father Malebranche, when speaking of Descartes, who then enjoyed as high a reputation* in France as Newton did afterwards in England. He says:—

“But without relying on the opinion that we may have of these two philosophers (Aristotle and Descartes), *and of all others*, let us still look upon them as men, and let not the Aristotelians be displeased, if, after having walked so many ages in darkness, without being able to make any further advancement, we are willing to see with our own eyes, and if, after having been led like blind men, we now remember that we have eyes, and endeavour to conduct ourselves.

“Let us then be fully convinced of this rule, *never to give an entire assent but to things that are evident*. This is the most necessary of all rules in a *search after truth*, and let us not admit any thing into our minds as truth, but what appears with the evidence that this rule demands. We must be persuaded thereof, to lay by our prejudices, and it is absolutely necessary that we be delivered from our prepossessions to enter into the knowledge of truth, because the mind must be purified before it can be enlightened. *Sapientia prima est stultitiâ caruisse.*”†

There still remains one point, which seems to me unaccountable. Colonel Kennedy says, that, though he has the work before him, he cannot verify my quotation of *Mānasa Srishti*, in KULLÚKA’S Comment, book I. verse 27. This is the more extraordinary, as the work, which was edited by Professor Wilson, is printed and numbered with all the regularity and order that belong to European typography. In justice to my own accuracy, I must say, that I find my quotation to be perfectly correct; and that it exists in both the editions published in Calcutta. Any one, taking an interest in the subject, may refer to these works in the library of the Royal Asiatic Society.

I now take leave of this controversy, and must request the indulgence of your readers for any inaccuracies of style which may be perceived in this letter; for, owing to the state of my health and sight, the greater part of it has been dictated to an *amanuensis*, and from the same cause it may want that careful revision required in treating of so many topics.

I remain, Sir, &c. &c.,

London, 20th October 1835.

GRAVES C. HAUGHTON.

* “Such is at the present day the fate of this great man, that after having had innumerable followers, he is reduced to the state of requiring apologists.”—Preliminary Disc. to the *Encyclopédie* by D’Alembert.

† Malebranche’s Search after Truth. Vol. i. book i. chapter 3.

A P P E N D I X.

Some Observations on the Hindu and European Notions of Cause and Effect.

A CAREFUL consideration of what the Hindus have said on Cause and Effect makes it evident that they have fallen into the same error as the Greeks and modern writers on that subject; and that they have blended the *relation* of cause and effect with the question of *source* and *product*, as well as with that of *doer* and *deed*, *agent* and *act*; and that they have also used the word *cause* in the sense of *efficient*, *maker*, *motive*, *reason*, *origin*, &c., as is done by our own metaphysicians. The Latin *causa*, the Greek *αἰτία** and the Sanscrit *hētu*, are all simple terms, the verbal derivation of which is not now obvious, so that no means remain of defining their actual import by analysis, nor by any ulterior reference; but it will be seen in the course of the following remarks, that this cannot be assigned as the reason of the great obscurity and confusion in which the true meaning of these words is involved.

Though mankind, by that discrimination with which they are commonly endowed, not only, generally speaking, use language correctly, but immediately feel the impropriety of anything that is contrary to its true analogies, yet there are very few indeed who could, even after some labour of thought, give anything like a rational solution of the nature of the words they have been employing. Most people, if they were asked what they meant by the word *cause*, would fly to an illustration, and point to a *thing* of some kind as being a cause. But this would be an error; for the word *cause* implies the *relation* in which the thing stands, and not the thing itself. Cause, therefore, is merely a *general term* which the mind employs to mark one of the two relations in which anything may, under certain circumstances, be contemplated. A word that implies a relation, must, by its nature, have another that is invariably understood, and which is its correlative attendant: thus the term *father* implies that there is a child; *husband*, that there is a wife, &c.; and by the same analogy, *cause* implies that there must be something else, which we call an effect: but the sense of the word *thing* is complete and absolute in itself, without the aid of any other word. Even Locke, when he defines cause as *a substance exerting its power into act*,† has fallen into this mistake; for cause can never be a sub-

* The Greek *αἰτία* is in all probability derived from the Sanscrit *hētu*. The want of etymological significancy in these words is a proof of their great antiquity, and shews that they were of the first necessity, as is also clear from their import. The Sanscrit *krāna*, implying *the making to do*, is evidently of much later use.

† I have not been able to verify this quotation, which is taken from Johnson's Dictionary, where it is employed to elucidate the word *cause*; but this is of very little consequence, as it is only necessary to refer to Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Bk. II. Ch. XXXVI. § 2, to see that it is supported by his argument on Cause and Effect; for he says there, *a cause is that which makes any other thing either simple idea, substance or mode, begin to be; and an effect is that which had its beginning from some other thing*. This definition, which applies very well to agent and result, does not contain any allusion to the *perception of relation*, which alone constitutes that of cause and effect.

stance; but substance may stand *in the relation of a cause* which is to produce an effect. The definition is likewise incomplete, as it is inapplicable to the Deity, or first cause.

These general distinctions have been premised for the purpose of leading the mind of the reader to the true consideration of this not unimportant question, as the fallacies of many of the ablest writers have derived their importance solely from the obscurity and confusion in which the import of the term *cause* has been involved. We have just seen that *substance cannot be a cause*, but that it may stand *in the relation of cause*; that is, that the mind observing any series of changes or results, perceives that these follow one another in a sequence, and to the *perception* that one is prior to the other it gives the name of 'cause;' seeing that they are related together by being one before and the other after, and contingent upon it. *Therefore, till there was a mind to perceive the relation of events there could be no cause, as it is merely a mental distinction*; but this has nothing to do with *agent, maker, efficient, or source*, for these must have had an existence whether there was a mind to perceive them or not.

Having thus cleared away all other imports from the word *cause*, except that which really belongs to it, namely, a relation of something that is perceived to be prior to another relation that is called an effect, we must see that when it is employed for *source, origin, reason, motive, efficient, agent, or maker*, we are really talking about things with which it has no logical affinity. When we say, therefore, that God is the *final cause* of all things, we mean, though we express ourselves incorrectly, that he is the *source or maker* of all things. When again we talk of *secondary causes*, we must intend the subsidiary agents or *means* by which an effect is produced. By the same analogy, we cannot with propriety, speak of *efficient and material causes*; for the first means an *agent* capable of effecting anything, and the second a source from which something proceeds, and which can have nothing to do with the real meaning of cause, that is, *the perception of relation between the doer and the deed, or the agent and the act*.

The importance of the foregoing distinctions and elucidations will be immediately felt when the application is made to the arguments of KAPILA, and the other *Sāṅkhya* philosophers. For when they assert* that effects exist in their causes, and that "what exists not, can by no operation of the cause be brought into existence," and elucidate their meaning by saying that the oil previously existed in the seed from which it was expressed, we must immediately see that by the word *cause* they intend a source from which a production proceeds, which is a mere truism; for, undoubtedly, without a source there could be no production; but when they apply it to the Divine Source of all things, they beg the question; for they might as well argue that, as every numerical series is composed of units, a unit must come from something else, which every one will allow would be nonsense. Now, to continue this illustration, it may be said that, just as the unit is the admitted starting post of numbers, so must the Deity be the source of all things; and all productions, natural and artificial, proceed from his essence, as all multiples do from the unit.

The whole of this confusion in the use of the term *cause* has arisen from the very nature of the human mind, which, deriving all its ideas of language from sensible objects, assimilates every thing to substance, and considers all abstractions as realities. It is on this account that employing, as we do, such words as *cause*, from infancy upwards as something real, we never arrive at any idea of

their real import, but by close reflection. Now experience proves that this is an operation beyond any systematic effort of the generality of mankind; and if the mind does even occasionally light upon the truth, it is only, as is exemplified in the electric flash, which gives a momentary gleam, to leave us at once in the obscurity in which it found us. Owing to this inveterate, and almost inevitable mental error, and to the consequent confusion of ideas, we have been led to the invention of a verb meaning *to cause*; and we make use of such expressions as *he caused him to fall*. But as the verb *to cause*, in such senses, means *to make to do*, and therefore implies that *he made him fall*, it must express *agency*, and not *mental relation*; for when the phrase is properly expressed, it means, he, standing in the relation of cause, *made* him fall. This misuse of language is not of the least consequence in the common business of life, as it misleads no one; but it is of the highest importance when we reason about fundamental notions, as it then becomes the source of the worst errors of philosophy, deceiving those who are considered the infallible authorities of the rest of mankind; and thereby rivetting the human mind in the fetters of their own mistakes. Such being the nature of language, we cannot hope, nor is it necessary to alter its course; but it is incumbent on philosophers to bear its imperfections in mind, when they attempt to philosophize upon the nature of things, and to endeavour to prevent it from misleading themselves, as well as those for whom they write.

It may, however, be objected by those who have not attended closely to the tenor of these observations, that cause and effect have always been regarded by philosophic writers as standing in a state of relation to one another; and and that, as a proof, they always speak of "the relation of cause and effect." This is perfectly true; but while they have so spoken, they have always argued as if cause were something *real*, instead of a mental perception. Indeed, they have converted it, by their mode of argumentation, into an *entity*, or rather a *substantiality*, possessing agency, and capable of producing effects; and this is proved, not merely by the quotation from Locke, but likewise by the use of the verb *to cause*, implying *to make to do*; and the noun of action, *causation*, signifying *the act of making to do*, which such writers employ on the same occasions with equal incorrectness. By a strange inconsistency arising from the deceptive character of language, they convert the relation of cause into an agent, and at the same time fancy they employ the verb *to cause*, and the noun *causation*, in a manner that only intends relation! So inveterate are these errors in our way of thinking, owing to the nature of our minds, as well as of language, and of habit as the consequence of its employment, that it will require no ordinary effort in the reasoner who may attempt to liberate himself from their thralldom; and an attentive perusal of the arguments that have been adduced on the nature of cause and effect, by any one who shall keep the foregoing distinction in view, will make him feel that those stately disquisitions that have been raised on the fallacy here exposed, are often but mere verbiage, *vox et præterea nihil*, or, at the best, but as the *baseless fabric of a vision*. The same kind of fallacy could with ease be shewn, on nearly similar grounds, to be the case with all the arguments generally used about Nature and Necessity.

The only chance of preventing the errors that have been pointed out from being committed by those who are not accustomed to analyze their own thoughts, is to remember, that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred in which the word *cause* is employed, it is involved in this fundamental error. They should therefore always consider, when they adopt the term, whether they use it in any of the many senses that have been already pointed out, and if so, they should employ the specific word in its place; that is, if they intend to speak of an

origin, a *motive*, &c., they should employ those words, and no other. With respect, too, to the verb *to cause*, and to the noun *causation*, these should never be employed in any case where the relation of cause and effect is intended; as they invariably imply *agency*, and not *relation*, and they consequently establish the very point of dispute in such cases, namely, the existence of a *causer*, *agent*, or *doer*, which being once admitted, the whole subject of debate falls to the ground. As a proof of the importance of the foregoing distinctions and observations, a few remarks are here added that will at once illustrate and confirm their truth; and for the purpose of pointing out the constancy of the fallacy about *cause*, whenever it is adopted by popular usage for an agent instead of a perception of relation, the word *causer* is made to follow it in brackets. Were the subject clearly and universally comprehended, it would save much chance of confusion if the word *cause* were always restricted to the sense of the relation, and *causer* to that of the agent or efficient of a result.

When the Hindu metaphysicians, after the enunciation of the rule, give the examples by which the exact import of the term may be inferred, we must see clearly that they sometimes employ the word *cause* as the *efficient*, *effector*, *producer*, *agent*, or *maker*, and sometimes as the *source* of production; and often as the *reason*, or the *motive*, as well as the *origin* of anything, just as is done by the metaphysicians of Europe.

When they say, therefore, that there is no distinction between cause and effect, and that *effects exist in their causes*, it is clear, from the example they give, namely, that *the seed of sesamum is the cause of the oil*, and that therefore the oil existed in its cause, which was the seed, they have palpably confounded *agent* and *source*, and that the seed can neither be considered as standing in the relation of cause, nor as an agent or causer. It is quite evident that the oil, as a product, must have existed in its source, which was the seed. So likewise, when they say *the Deity is the efficient cause of the universe*, they mean that he was the agent in producing it: and when they say he was also its *material cause*, they imply that he was the source from which it proceeded. Now when we assert that *God made the world*, we mean to say that he stands in the relation of its *cause*, that he is its *source* and its *maker*, which senses are all included in the one word, CREATOR; and, by the same reason, the world is contemplated as an *effect* of his power, as the *product* of his essence, and the *work* of his agency. The *Sánkhya* philosophers, therefore, in asserting that that which did not previously exist, could not by any effort of the cause (causer) be brought into existence, have, by separating the cause (causer) in this case from the source, made a *petitio principii*, and proved their own point by the form of the enunciation, for it will be evident that when we consider the cause (causer) we call first, we must not argue as we would about the cause (causer) we contemplate as secondary; as we cannot here separate cause (causer) and source, though we may do so afterwards, for we then know by observation, that they are distinct. Thus, to borrow a Hindu illustration, the potter is the cause (i. e. *causer* or *maker*) of the pot, but he is not the source of the earth of which it is formed. Sometimes, however, what we call a secondary cause (causer) must include the two distinctions; as when we say, *the spider spins his web*, of which he is at once the cause (causer) and the source, and consequently the web is a *work* and a *product*; and the spider stands in the relation of *cause* to the web, which is reciprocally in that of *effect* to him. But those who have been familiarised to the jargon of the schools, which has been current from Aristotle to the present time, will here, perhaps, fly from the real scope of this argument, which is to prove that cause and effect imply simply a *perception of relation*,

and will say that the oil existed *potentially* in the sesamum, just as the fruit existed potentially in the tree, and the tree in its seed, and the seed in the preceding tree and seed, &c. But the fallacy of this argument, which has nothing to do with the present question, will be evident, by shewing that by a similar process of reasoning we might say that all the bullets cast in a mould existed potentially in the mould, as the lead poured in is only the equivalent of the nutriment taken in by the tree and seed. The potentiality which produced the bullets existed in the individual who made the mould and cast the bullets, and the potentiality of the individual exists only in God, who made and sustains him; and the same must be said of the tree and seed, which have their existence from the Deity only, who is, therefore, the source of all power and of all existence.

It may not, however, be without its use to carry this enquiry a few steps further, and to consider the unanswerable objection that attends upon materialism, with regard to the doctrine of power. The atheist considers that power is inherent in matter, and inseparable from it; and that it is through its own energy that this universe, with all its wonderful variety, has arisen. Perhaps the best answer to the groundlessness of this assumption will be to consider the nature of the power with which the materialist endows matter, and this may be done in a few words. Power must be either something *real* or something *ideal*, that is, it is either concrete or abstract. In the case of a cannon ball the power passes from the gunpowder, by its explosion, into the ball. It is, therefore, clear that it is capable of augmentation and diminution; and that it consequently can be transferred from one body to another. Power, therefore, it must be seen, is not an inherent and inseparable property of matter. But it may be replied, that by power is meant nothing that is transferable, but merely an inherent energy which is in matter, and which, by certain mechanical arrangements, enables one thing to give impulse to another. This last explanation implies that it is nothing *real* that is meant by power, but something *ideal*; and to this last supposition, therefore, the remainder of the argument must be directed. Power and energy, if they do not mean something real, mean nothing at all, as they are mere abstract terms employed by the mind for the convenience of reasoning; and the materialist, in using them without a material sense,* has really, in this instance, changed himself into an *idealist*, and is so inconclusive a reasoner as to admit of operations that stand in the relation of effects, and yet to deny the existence of the indispensable thing which can alone produce what are to stand in the relation of causes. But as there may be some materialists that do not hold the doctrine that power is inherent in matter, though they deny the existence of an All-wise Mind, rendering it the instrument of his WILL in producing the phenomena we witness around us, the following remarks are intended as an answer to such a supposition.

Power being admitted to exist as a real something, it may be asked what it is that directs or guides it into the production of all the exquisite forms we see in nature? Every individual has a certain degree of power at his command; still, experience shows us that there must be a most felicitous combination of circumstances, such as fine organization, years of instruction and application to a particular branch of study, before he (who is himself assumed

* By the word *material*, it is meant that they imply something real, however subtle, and not an abstraction.

to be a mere production of chance!) is fitted to give even an ordinary and lifeless imitation of those graceful and beautiful objects, which, according to the supposition of the atheist, have arisen fortuitously, that is, without a directing mind.

The power possessed by every individual is exhausted after a certain degree of effort; and sleep and repose are both necessary for its renewal. We find that a watch will not go till it is wound up, that is, till a certain degree of power is communicated to it; by what process, therefore, is it that the individual is, as it were, wound up, or renovated for new efforts? Repose and sleep, which are mere states of quiescence, could not do it; there must, consequently, have been some agent at work, which has, so to say, recharged him with power for the labours of the coming day. That agent the theist calls God; the atheist terms it repose, *a mere abstract term*, and therefore devoid of reality. He has, consequently, assigned an effect without a cause (causer), merely from his ignorance of the nature of language.

If it be argued that the power which had been exhausted by effort returns to the individual by the simple process of sleep, it will be only necessary to bear in mind that what has life must possess more power than that which is inanimate: consequently, if there was a transfer of power by the ordinary laws of nature, it would pass from that which is alive into that which is not: that is, if it tended to an equalization, it would quit and not enter the body. But so far is this from being the case, that we find that the body receives an increase of power during sleep. There remains, therefore, but one inference to be drawn from this fact, namely, that the power of the sleeping body has been replenished by some agency. Vital function could not be assigned as the reason, since function itself, as an *action*, must require an actor or agent for its production; and it could, therefore, be only the *medium* by which the end was effected.

But it may be said, that if the food was flesh, the power was transferred from it to the individual who ate it; and, though this must be true to a certain extent, as experience proves, still, at the best, it could be but the *vehicle* of the power, and cannot do away with the necessity of some agency by which the transfer was effected, and does not account for the means by which it entered the animal from whom the flesh was taken. It may, perhaps, be replied, that he got it from the herbage on which he fed; but if so, whence did the herbage acquire it? Now all this shows, that in each step of the progression we must suppose a conscious and efficient, though invisible agency as the prime source of all these natural operations. These inextricable difficulties of atheism have evidently beset the human mind from the earliest periods of its investigations, as will be seen by the following extracts from the book of Job (xxxiii., 8, 9), one of the *very earliest*, as well as most sublime compositions that have come down to us from ancient times, where speaking of the agency of the Deity it is said:—

“ Behold, I go forward but he *is not there*, and backward, but I cannot perceive him:

“ On the left hand, *WHERE HE DOTH WORK*, but I cannot behold *him*; he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see *him*.”

To sum up the inferences to be drawn from the preceding argument, it may be stated, that the definition of cause and effect is simply as follows. *Whatever produces a change stands in the relation of a cause, and whatever change results from it, in that of an effect.* This general proposition will meet every

case; but, as it may be often useful to consider the law in its threefold distinction, it is here subjoined under its separate heads.

Physical.

I. In the *material world*, when power produces a result, the power stands in the relation of a cause, and whatever change results from its operation, in that of an effect.

Mental.

II. In the *moral world*, that which influences or affects the mind, is contemplated as standing in the relation of a cause, and whatever results from that influence, or affection, in that of an effect.

Metaphorical.

III. In *figurative language*, whatever is supposed to produce a change, stands in the relation of a cause, and whatever is inferred to arise from it, in that of an effect.

Every instance that may be adduced regarding cause and effect, which is not physical or mental, will be found to arise from the use of figurative language, which employs the same expressions as when the case concerns *real* power. Thus, in the phrase *virtue is the cause of happiness*, the expression is not merely metaphorical, but contains, *metaphysically* speaking, two errors. The first is, that *cause*, instead of implying the relation in which virtue stands to happiness, which is the effect, is employed to indicate an agent or *causer* producing a result. The second is, that virtue and happiness are used as if they were realities, and that the antecedent had the power of producing the consequent; though, from both words being mere abstract terms, power can neither be conferred by the one, nor received by the other. The sentiment, therefore, when released from its figurative and abstract character, merely implies, that *the individual who acts virtuously will be happy*. Sometimes, the two first kinds are blended, and a moral cause gives rise to a physical effect; as when we say, "shame caused him to commit suicide;" and for the same reason a physical cause produces a moral effect; as in the expression, "the blow caused him to become angry." Those abstract states which logicians call accidents, are also treated as substances; as when we say, "heat causes fluidity." In this instance, heat stands in the relation of cause, and fluidity in that of effect; it may, however, be doubted whether we can find an *accident*, standing in the relation of a cause, to effects that are physical or mental.

The remarks which are now about to be offered to the reader's consideration, and to which his attention is requested, contain the *real* essence of this question, and they have been kept back for the purpose of preparing his mind for what would have been otherwise unintelligible or inconclusive. Passing over the error that has been pointed out, of *cause* being considered as a *substance* instead of a *relation*, it is uniformly thought, that in a series of things acting upon one another the prior is the cause, and the subsequent the effect. Thus, in a series of balls put in motion by the billiard-player, the first ball is said to be the cause, and the next the effect to it, and the cause to the one it strikes, and so on, till the whole are put in movement. That this, however, is a fallacy, will be evident, if we remember that the first ball, which we call the cause, has only moved the second, and that, therefore, the effect it produced was the *movement* of the second. Now, if there were fifty balls, each separately moved by the one that preceded it, it might be said that there were fifty movements, though, in point of fact, we can only say that the fifty balls were

moved. Having got thus far, let us consider that it was the movement of the first ball that made the second to change its place, and so communicated an impulse to the whole series. The moment we see this clearly, we must be convinced that it was not the first ball, but its *movement*, that moved the second; and that the movement of the second made the next change place, till the whole were urged forward in succession. In all this operation, we cannot fail to perceive that we have had fifty effects and not one cause; for, otherwise, *movement* must be both cause and effect; and, if we suppose it so, then we arrive at this conclusion, that movement stands in the relation of cause to movement, which it as much as to say, that movement can produce itself, or, in plain language, that *change of place can produce change of place!* To get at the cause (causer), therefore, we must go back to the billiard-player, who put the whole in movement. Now, it is evident that all the effects witnessed on this or any other occasion, are simply changes that evidence the passage of *something* that flits from the first to the last, and which, being propagated by the will of the agent or doer, forces the ball on till it is arrested in its progress by impinging on the next, which it moves in its turn. The something that operates in such changes mankind have agreed to call **POWER**, which, *as long as we believe in the reality of the external world*, is a *real* essence, capable, *under direction*, of effecting all the changes that arise from the *will* of individual beings, or the *will* of God. But as matter is seen to be passive, or at least may be considered so, from the uniformity of the law of gravitation, power is the sole means by which it is set in movement when it is once at rest; but as power is unequal to produce an effect, except under direction, it cannot, strictly speaking, be held to be a cause (causer), but must be merely considered as the medium by which the real cause (causer), that is, the Deity, carries on all the operations observed in nature. As all things in nature are but results dependant upon the Divine Will, we must, if we desire to be conclusive in our reasoning, admit that there is no *real cause* (causer) but God, who, in his character of Creator, forms and sustains all things, being both the origin and the agent in the production of the universe: it is **HE**, therefore, as the source of causality, that stands in the relation of *causa causarum* to all things: **FOR IN HIM WE LIVE, AND MOVE, AND HAVE OUR BEING.**

Of the Maxim "Ex Nihilo Nihil fit."

THE preceding remarks appear to the writer to be indispensable to the taking a rational view of the celebrated maxim *ex nihilo nihil fit* of the ancient Greek philosophers; for though some of the Hindu metaphysicians hold the doctrine that *nothing comes from nothing*, which cannot be disputed, and seems at first sight to be nearly the same opinion as that of the Greeks, yet it does, in fact, essentially differ from it, as the first merely implies that without a source there can be no product, but it has no reference to an agent or *causer*; while the other means something more, by intimating that no agent could produce a work without having a source from which to elicit his production. The opinion of the Greeks, though essentially true in itself as regards any secondary cause (causer) or agent, is utterly inapplicable to the Deity, as it assumes the fact that his work, that is, the universe, is distinct from his essence; and to prove the fallacy of such a supposition, it is only necessary to consider what would be the inevitable consequences of the eternal and absolute existence of matter, with a Deity separate and attempting to operate upon it; and this may be done without taking into consideration the still greater difficulty, how either could, in that case, have had any claim to infinity.

The absurdity of the maxim of the Greeks, which Hume justly characterizes as impious,* consists in supposing a being existing without a cause (causer), and therefore of himself, and yet unable to produce matter by his *fiat*. A Deity so inefficient as the maxim supposes him, must either have been pure spirit, or pure matter, or a compound of both. If we regard him as pure spirit, but unable to modify matter by his *fiat*, we must immediately admit that he could not have acted upon chaotic matter so as to give birth to the universe. So likewise if we suppose such a Deity to be pure matter, he must have remained like a statue, inert, powerless, and lifeless; and therefore incapable of creation. There remains, then, but the third supposition, namely, that he was a compound of both spirit and matter. But such a notion as the last implies a self-evident contradiction; for as he existed of himself, without any extraneous cause, how could matter and spirit become blended in his person? If, the Deity being spirit had no power to modify matter by his *fiat*, how could he operate upon it so as to give it that form that was necessary to constitute the corporeity that united both natures in his own person, namely, spirit and matter? But granting for a moment that such a union could have arisen by some sort of process or result incapable of being conceived by the human mind, he must still have been under the necessity of fashioning for himself instruments with which to work, like a mere mechanic; and even then it is impossible to conceive how he could regulate the birth, maturity, and decay of universal nature. He could not himself have escaped the influence of gravitation, which we must, on the hypothesis of his origin, suppose to be an inherent and indestructible property of matter. It is likewise evident that a being so constituted could have had no ubiquity; for, as he would be composed of matter, whatever place he occupied would exclude any planetary system, and he and his work could never have occupied the same part of space. He must have been either large or small. If large, all the heavenly

* Essays, vol. II. Note Q.

orbs must, by the power of gravitation, have clustered round him, just as barnacles attach themselves round a wreck at sea ; and merely added to his mass. If small, he could have had scarcely any influence upon any object larger than himself ; and he must have fallen in by the same force upon what he never could have formed. In short, the difficulties and absurdities attendant upon the supposition of the independent and absolute existence of matter are too many to admit of its being entertained by any reflecting mind that has given the subject a moment of due consideration.

The sum of the argument amounts to this, that whether we divide or multiply matter *ad infinitum*, we arrive at a contradiction to common sense ; and we have but one conclusion left us from the incomprehensible nature of the subject, namely, that every thing we see, and feel, and think about, are but *results* presented to us by Divine Omnipotence and Wisdom, for reasons which it would be folly in us to attempt to scan.

THE END.

(*Extracted from the Asiatic Journal for March 1836*).

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